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Economic and Social Council

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Statistical Commission
Forty-third session
28 February-2 March 2012
Item 4 (k) of the provisional agenda*
Items for information: follow-up to Economic and Social Council policy decisions

Policy decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its forty-first session (see E/2011/24, chap. I.A), the present note is submitted to brief the Commission on policy decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council adopted in 2011 or earlier that are relevant to the work of the Commission. The note, furthermore, indicates the actions taken and proposed to be taken by the Commission and the Statistics Division, in an effort to respond to the requests made by the Assembly and the Council. The Commission is invited to take note of the report.

* E/CN.3/2012/1.

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I. Follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals

A. Action requested by the General Assembly

1. In its resolution 65/1, entitled "Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals", the General Assembly, among other things, requested the Secretary-General to make recommendations for further steps to advance the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015. At the time of writing of the present report, the General Assembly was considering reports of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/66/1) and on accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals: options for sustained and inclusive growth and issues for advancing the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 (A/66/126). The latter report describes, the Secretariat's reflections on and preparations for the post-Millennium Development Goals, post-2015 period.

B. Actions taken and proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

2. Since the Economic and Social Council invited the Statistical Commission to serve as the intergovernmental focal point for the review of indicators used by the United Nations system for the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits (see Council resolutions 1999/55 and 2000/27), the Commission has been discussing the technical aspects of development indicators, as well as related issues of capacity-building, on a continuous basis. At its forty-third session, the Commission will consider a report of the Secretary-General on development indicators for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals (E/CN.3/2012/29), as well as the report of the World Bank on efforts in developing a plan of action on statistical development (E/CN.3/2012/16). In the report on the Millennium Development Goals, the Secretary-General recalls a recommendation by the 2011 International Conference on the Millennium Development Goals Statistics, held in Manila in October 2011 and organized by the Statistics Division and the National Statistical Coordination Board of the Philippines, which called for the full involvement of the statistical community in the setting of targets and indicators for Millennium Development Goals beyond 2015 and for sustaining the gains achieved in statistical capacity-building.

3. The Statistics Division currently executes several multi-year statistical capacity-building projects covering a wide range of statistical areas, with special focus on data collection and dissemination of Millennium Development Goal indicators. The Division also executes several capacity-building projects in support of the 2010 population and housing census round and for the improvement of gender statistics, which will contribute to increasing the availability of sex- and age-disaggregated data.

II. United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

A. Action requested by the General Assembly

4. In pursuance of General Assembly resolution 64/236, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development is being organized. The Conference will take place in Rio de Janeiro from 20 to 22 June 2012 and will mark the twentieth anniversary of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, also held in Rio de Janeiro, and the tenth anniversary of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg. It is envisaged as a Conference at the highest possible level, including Heads of State and Government or other representatives. In paragraph 22 of resolution 64/236, the General Assembly invited relevant stakeholders, including organizations and bodies of the United Nations, international financial institutions and major groups involved in the area of sustainable development, to provide ideas and proposals reflecting their experiences and lessons learned as a contribution to the preparatory process.

B. Actions taken and proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

5. The Statistical Commission regularly considers items relating to environmental statistics and environmental accounting. At its forty-third session, the Commission will do so again under agenda items 3 (e), on environmental-economic accounting, and 3 (f) on environment statistics. For its consideration of the items, the Commission will have before it the report of the Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (E/CN.3/2012/8) and the report of the Secretary-General on revision of the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (E/CN.3/2012/9). Both the proposed Framework for the Development of Environmental Statistics and the System of Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting are considered important and indispensable tools for the formulation and monitoring of policies in support of sustainable development.

III. Multi-year programme of work for annual ministerial reviews of the Economic and Social Council

A. Action requested by the Economic and Social Council

6. As mandated by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2006/44, a meeting of the Bureau of the Council with the chairs of the functional commissions is to be held annually in the early part of the year. In its decision 2011/208, the Council decided to adopt the following theme for its annual ministerial review for 2012: "Promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all levels for achieving the Millennium Development Goals". The substantive contributions of the Council's functional commissions and expert bodies are considered essential for the success of the reviews.

B. Actions taken and proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

7. The Chair of the Statistical Commission will participate in the meeting of the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council with the chairs of the functional commissions in February 2012 and will provide input to the Council's 2012 annual ministerial review. The Chair will brief the Bureau of the Council on the Commission's work in the area of labour statistics. The Commission had conducted a programme review on this topic in 2008 (see E/CN.3/2008/2) and subsequently considered two reports by the International Labour Organization (ILO) (E/CN.3/2009/12 and E/CN.3/2010/18), in which the ongoing methodological and capacity-building work of ILO is described.

IV. Global geospatial information management

A. Action requested by the Economic and Social Council

8. On the request of the Economic and Social Council (decision 2010/240) the Secretary-General submitted to the Council at its substantive session of 2011 a report on global geospatial information management (E/2011/89).

9. In its resolution 2011/24, the Council took note of the report and the recommendations contained therein; recognized the need to promote international cooperation in the field of global geospatial information; decided, in that regard, to establish the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, to be established and administered within existing resources and organized accordingly, and requested the Committee to present to the Council in 2016 a comprehensive review of all aspects of its work and operations, in order to allow Member States to assess its effectiveness; encouraged Member States to hold regular high-level, multi-stakeholder discussions on global geospatial information, including through the convening of global forums, with a view to promoting a comprehensive dialogue with all relevant actors and bodies; and emphasized the importance of promoting national, regional and global efforts to foster the exchange of knowledge and expertise, to assist developing countries in building and strengthening national capacities in this field.

B. Actions taken and proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

10. The Statistics Division, together with the Cartographic Section of the Department of Field Support, organized the first meeting of the newly created United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management on 26 October 2011 in Seoul. The meeting was preceded by a High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management (24-26 October 2011). The Commission is being kept informed regarding the latest developments in this field, and at its forty-third session will consider global geospatial information management based on a report of the Secretary-General on the issue (E/CN.3/2012/31).

V. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions on strengthening national capacity in statistics and on the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme

A. Action requested by the Economic and Social Council

11. The Economic and Social Council adopted two resolutions in 2005 and 2006 on the recommendation of the Statistical Commission. One was on strengthening statistical capacity (resolution 2006/6), and the other was on the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme (resolution 2005/13). In resolution 2006/6, the Council called for an intensification of efforts to support national statistical programmes in strengthening their capacity. In resolution 2005/13, the Council emphasized the importance of the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme for socio-economic planning, and requested increased support for the Programme.

B. Actions taken and proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

12. At its forty-third session, the Commission will consider specific follow-up actions to those resolutions under agenda items 3 (a), Programme review: population and housing censuses, and 3 (m), Efforts in developing a plan of action on statistical development. The documentation presented under these items describes in detail activities undertaken by the Statistics Division and by its partner agencies to improve the availability and quality of data, to support the 2010 World Population and Housing Census round and to improve the coordination and impact of technical cooperation activities.

VI. Improving the collection, reporting and analysis of data on migration, ageing, youth and people with disabilities

A. Action requested by the General Assembly

13. In its resolution 65/170 on international migration and development, the General Assembly called upon the United Nations system and other relevant international organizations and multilateral institutions to enhance their cooperation in the promotion and development of methodologies for the collection and processing of internationally comparable statistical data on international migration and the situation of migrants in countries of origin, transit and destination, and to assist Member States in their capacity-building efforts in this regard.

14. In its resolution 66/127 on follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing the General Assembly recommended that Member States enhance their capacity regarding more effective data collection, statistics and qualitative information, in order to better assess the situation of older persons. It also encouraged the international community and relevant agencies of the United Nations system to support national efforts to provide funding for research and data-collection initiatives on ageing as appropriate.

15. Furthermore, in the outcome document of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding, held in New York on 25 and 26 July 2011, the Assembly reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to propose a set of possible indicators linked to the World Programme of Action for Youth and the proposed goals and targets.

16. In its resolution 65/186 on realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond the General Assembly called upon Governments to strengthen the collection and compilation of national data and information about the situation of persons with disabilities, and invited Governments to provide, where available, relevant data and statistics to the appropriate mechanism within the United Nations system including the Statistical Commission. It also requested the United Nations system to facilitate technical assistance for capacity-building and for the collection and compilation of national and regional data and statistics on disability.

B. Actions taken and proposed by the Statistical Commission and the Statistics Division

17. The Commission continues to be active in these important policy areas, supporting the development of new methodologies where necessary and improving the collection of data. After an interruption of several years, the Statistics Division resumed in 2011 the collection of data on annual migration flows, through the regular *Demographic Yearbook* data collection system. The data furnished by Member States will be published in the *Yearbook*. The data on migrant stock will continue to be collected through the *Yearbook* census questionnaire. Moreover, data generated by the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme will improve the availability of information regarding ageing and youth (see also section V above). Furthermore, the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs organized an expert group meeting on quantitative indicators for the World Programme of Action for Youth in December 2011, to which the Statistical Division made substantive inputs. The issue of disability statistics is regularly considered by the Commission: at its forty-third session, the Commission will review the progress made by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics (see E/CN.3/2012/21).

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Items for information: global geospatial information management

Global geospatial information management

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its forty-first session (see E/2010/24, chap. I.B, decision 41/110), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit his report on global geospatial information management, which provides an update on recent activities in this field. The report discusses, in particular, the establishment in July 2011 of a new subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council, namely, the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management. The findings of the inaugural session of the United Nations Committee of Experts and of the first United Nations High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, held in Seoul in October 2011, are presented. The report also describes planned activities for 2012, in particular the second session of the Committee of Experts, to be held in New York in August 2012.

The Commission is invited to take note of the present report.

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I. Introduction

1. At its forty-first session in 2010 (see E/2010/24, chap. I.B, decision 41/110), the Statistical Commission recognized the importance of the integration of geospatial[1] and statistical information and requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report outlining a global vision for geospatial information management to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council, reviewing the existing mechanisms and exploring the possibility of creating a global forum. In addition, the Commission requested the Statistics Division to convene a meeting of an international expert group, consisting of statisticians and geospatial information specialists, to address global geospatial information management issues. At its forty-second session in 2011, the Commission received an update (E/CN.3/2011/34) on how the Division had implemented the above mandate of the Commission by organizing preparatory expert group meetings and by working towards a comprehensive report for submission to the Council. The present report covers activities since February 2011.

II. The formal establishment of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

2. Following the request made by the Statistical Commission, a comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on global geospatial information management (E/2011/89) was prepared and presented to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2011. This report had benefited from wide-ranging consultations with Member States and relevant stakeholders. Consequently, the Council recognized the need to promote international cooperation in the field of global geospatial information and decided to formally establish the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (see Council decision 2011/24, as contained in the annex to the present report). The Committee of Experts, an intergovernmental body, is bringing together, for the first time at the global level, Government experts from all Member States to hold consultations on the rapidly changing field of geospatial information, to hold regular high-level and multi-stakeholder discussions on global geospatial information, and to promote national, regional and global efforts towards fostering the exchange of knowledge and expertise and assisting developing countries in building and strengthening their national capacities in the field. The substantive recommendation of the Commission was instrumental in the establishment of this new subsidiary body of the Council and is explicitly acknowledged in the Council decision.

3. The United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management held its inaugural session in Seoul on 26 October 2011. The session was attended by representatives of almost 90 countries as well as by international professional organizations in their capacity as observers. During the substantive work of the session, participants discussed the possible contribution of this professional community to the forthcoming United Nations Conference on

[1] Economic and Social Council decision 2011/24 refers to "geographic information". However, during the consultation process with Member States, the experts recommended the use of the term "geospatial information" instead of "geographic information" because the former is more comprehensive and more commonly used at present.

Sustainable Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, and decided to establish a task force to prepare a report for the summit. The Committee also established a working group to prepare an inventory of major issues to be addressed by the Committee and to develop a programme of work outlining actions to be implemented during the next five years. In addition, the Committee established a group with a mandate to develop strategic considerations of technological and substantive advances in geospatial and interrelated information infrastructure. The Committee decided to hold its second session in New York, from 13 to 15 August 2012.[2]

III. Activities in the field of global geospatial information management

4. While the main efforts of the Statistics Division during the reporting period were concentrated on the formal establishment of the Committee of Experts, the Division carried out a number of global geospatial information management-related activities, which are briefly described below.

A. Third preparatory meeting on global geospatial information management

5. The Statistics Division in cooperation with the Cartographic Section of the Department of Field Support, organized the third preparatory meeting on global geospatial information management in New York from 4 to 6 April 2011.[3] Sixty experts from 20 countries, 6 United Nations entities and 11 regional and international professional organizations attended the meeting. Participants at the meeting reviewed and finalized the report on global geospatial information management to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council (E/2011/89) and discussed the preparations for the global geospatial information management-related events to be held in Seoul in October 2011.

B. United Nations High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management

6. The inaugural session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management was preceded by the first United Nations High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, which was co-organized by the United Nations and the Government of the Republic of Korea, represented by the National Geographical Information Institute. It was attended by 350 participants from 87 countries, including representatives of 12 international organizations, 15 private companies and 12 United Nations organizations. The High-

[2] The documents and report of the Committee of Experts can be consulted at its website (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html).

[3] The first preparatory meeting on global geospatial information management was held in Bangkok on 25 October 2009, one day prior to the eighteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific, and the second preparatory meeting was held in New York on 10 and 11 May 2010.

level Forum was jointly opened by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea and the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. During the initial ministerial segment, attended by eight ministers representing all regions of the world, ministers unanimously voiced their support for the initiative of the United Nations to foster geospatial information management among Member States, international organizations and the private sector. The Forum concluded with a summary provided by the Chair and the adoption of the Seoul Declaration on Global Geospatial Information Management.[4] In particular, participants recommended that actions be taken to foster and strengthen national, regional and global cooperation with the aim of developing an interconnected global community of practice on geospatial information under the auspices of the United Nations. They also stressed the importance of the establishment of effective processes for jointly and collaboratively promoting common frameworks and standards as well as harmonized definitions and methods, and recognized the importance of sharing experiences in policymaking, supporting legislation and funding strategies, as well as facilitating and promoting capacity development in developing countries. The Government of Qatar generously offered to convene the second High-level Forum in Doha in 2013.

7. On the day before the first High-level Forum, 29 business leaders and heads of national mapping agencies from 30 Member States participated in a special side event. They recognized the importance of coordination, cooperation and partnerships among a wide variety of multidisciplinary stakeholders in the public and private sectors underpinning the building of a national spatial data infrastructure, and acknowledged the role of public-private partnership in geospatial information production, dissemination and use.

C. Thematic seminar on the integration of statistical and geospatial information

8. A thematic seminar on the issues and challenges of integrating statistical and geospatial information was held in Seoul on 27 October 2011, immediately following the meeting of the Committee of Experts. This seminar was co-organized by the Statistics Division, Statistics Korea, the United States Bureau of the Census and Eurostat. It focused on the importance of geography to statistical information and the use of geospatial tools in support of statistical activities. Three major topics were considered: collecting and handling geospatial and statistical data; integrating statistical and geospatial data; and using integrated or combined geospatial and statistical data. It was recognized that the integration of these types of data with additional thematic data from other sources is beneficial for analysis and evidence-based decision-making.

D. Second Administrative-level Boundaries project

9. The Second Administrative-level Boundaries project was launched in 2001 in the context of the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group and developed under the leadership of the World Health Organization. A country-

[4] Available from http://ggim.un.org/forum1.html.

oriented initiative, it aims to provide countries and the international community at large with a working platform for the collection, management, analysis, visualization and sharing of subnational data down to the second subnational level. This information is crucial for many applications (including humanitarian assistance, disaster management, peace and security, censuses and statistical analysis, environment, health and education and poverty mapping). On 1 January 2011, the Statistics Division and the Cartographic Section joined forces to continue this initiative. Coordination and policy issues are managed by the Statistics Division and the Cartographic Section is responsible for technical aspects. Through this joint effort, the Second Administrative-level Boundaries project will be further developed and fully integrated within the framework of the United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management.

E. Global geospatial information management website

10. The Statistics Division is regularly updating its website dedicated to global geospatial information management.[5] The website contains background information on the mandate of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, on global geospatial information management activities and related initiatives, events and partners. Furthermore, the site also provides information and news about major events organized by the Division and others related to geographic information systems, cartography and standardization of geographical names.

IV. Future activities

A. Establishment of working groups

11. In accordance with the recommendation made by the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management at its inaugural session, the Statistics Division has initiated the establishment of a task force to prepare a contribution for the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. It has also established a working group to identify the major issues on geospatial information management to be discussed at future sessions of the Committee of Experts, and particularly to develop a programme of work to guide the work of the Committee of Experts during the next five years.

B. Second session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

12. The Statistics Division has initiated the preparations for the organization of the second session of the Committee of Experts, to be held in New York from 13 to 15 August 2012. The Committee will, inter alia, review its rules of procedure, adopt its future programme of work and discuss a follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

[5] Available from http://ggim.un.org/.

C. Second High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management

13. The second High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management will be held in Doha in early 2013. It will again function as an open forum that brings together Government representatives from all Member States as well as interested stakeholders from national and international organizations to address and discuss critical and cutting-edge issues on geospatial information management.

V. Conclusion

14. The work on global geospatial information management over the past two to three years has confirmed that one of the key challenges is a better integration of geospatial and statistical information as a basis for sound and evidence-based decision-making. There are considerable opportunities provided in that context by the swift development of information and communications technology. It is therefore imperative that the professional statistical community, in partnership with the relevant national authorities in the geospatial information field, remain fully informed and engaged in the further development of national geospatial information capacities and in the corresponding establishment of national spatial data infrastructures. To facilitate dialogue at the global level it is suggested that the Statistical Commission be kept regularly abreast of the work of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

Annex

Economic and Social Council decision 2011/24 entitled "Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management"

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its decision 2010/240 of 21 July 2010, in which it requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its substantive session of 2011 a report on global geographic information management,

Recalling also Statistical Commission decision 41/110 of 26 February 2010,[1] in which the Commission requested the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat to convene a meeting of an international expert group to address global geographic information management issues, including reviewing the existing mechanisms and exploring the possibility of creating a global forum,

Recalling further the resolution on global geographic information management adopted by the eighteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific,[2] in which the Conference requested the Secretary-General and the Secretariat of the United Nations to initiate discussions and prepare a report, for submission to the Economic and Social Council, on global coordination of geographic information management, including consideration of the possible creation of a United Nations global forum for the exchange of information between countries and other interested parties, and in particular for sharing best practices in legal and policy instruments, institutional management models, technical solutions and standards, interoperability of systems and data, and sharing mechanisms that guarantee easy and timely accessibility of geographic information and services,

Recognizing the importance of integrating cartographic and statistical information, as well as spatial data, with a view to fostering location-based geospatial information, applications and services,

Recognizing also the role of the United Nations in promoting international cooperation on cartography, geographical names and geospatial information, including through the organization of conferences, expert meetings, technical publications, training courses and cooperation projects,

Taking into account the urgent need to take concrete action to strengthen international cooperation in the area of global geospatial information,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on global geospatial information management[3] and the recommendations contained therein;

2. *Recognizes* the need to promote international cooperation in the field of global geospatial information;

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2010, Supplement No. 4* (E/2010/24), chap. I, sect. B.

[2] See *Eighteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific: Report of the Conference, Bangkok, 26-29 October 2009* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.10.I.2), chap. IV, sect. B.

[3] E/2011/89.

3. *Decides*, in this regard, to establish the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, in accordance with the terms of reference contained in the annex to the present resolution, to be established and administered within existing resources and organized accordingly, and requests the Committee to present to the Economic and Social Council in 2016 a comprehensive review of all aspects of its work and operations, in order to allow Member States to assess its effectiveness;

4. *Encourages* Member States to hold regular high-level, multi-stakeholder discussions on global geospatial information, including through the convening of global forums, with a view to promoting a comprehensive dialogue with all relevant actors and bodies;

5. *Emphasizes* the importance of promoting national, regional and global efforts to foster the exchange of knowledge and expertise, to assist developing countries in building and strengthening national capacities in this field.

47th plenary meeting
27 July 2011

Annex

Terms of reference of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

Objectives and functions

1. The objectives and functions of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management will be:

(a) To provide a forum for coordination and dialogue among Member States, and between Member States and relevant international organizations, including the United Nations regional cartographic conferences and their permanent committees on spatial data infrastructures, on enhanced cooperation in the field of global geospatial information;

(b) To propose workplans and guidelines with a view to promoting common principles, policies, methods, mechanisms and standards for the interoperability and interchangeability of geospatial data and services;

(c) To provide a platform for the development of effective strategies on how to build and strengthen national capacity concerning geospatial information, especially in developing countries, and, in this regard, to assist interested countries in developing the full potential of geospatial information and the underlying technology;

(d) To compile and disseminate best practices and experiences of national, regional and international bodies on geospatial information related, inter alia, to legal instruments, management models and technical standards, thus contributing to the establishment of spatial data infrastructures, while allowing for flexibility in the development of national geospatial activities;

(e) In performing its functions, the Committee should build upon and make use of the existing work of other forums and mechanisms in the related field.

Membership, composition and terms of office

2. The Committee will comprise experts from all Member States, as well as experts from international organizations, as observers. In appointing their national representatives, Member States will seek to designate experts with specific knowledge drawn from the interrelated fields of surveying, geography, cartography and mapping, remote sensing, land/sea and geographic information systems and environmental protection.

3. The Committee will elect two co-Chairs during each session from among its members, respecting geographical balance and representation.

4. The Committee may establish, as and when needed, informal working groups or subcommittees to deal with specific issues related to its work programme.

Reporting procedure

5. The Committee will report to the Economic and Social Council.

Frequency of meetings

6. The Committee will normally meet once a year and may hold, under exceptional circumstances, additional meetings, as appropriate.

Secretariat

7. The Committee will be supported by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Cartographic Section of the Department of Field Support.

Meeting documentation

8. Meeting documentation will include an agenda, the previous report of the Committee, thematic notes prepared by working groups or subcommittees, notes by the Secretariat and other relevant documents prepared by external experts or expert groups.

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Items for information: World Statistics Day

World Statistics Day

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. At its forty-first session, the Statistical Commission, in its decision 41/109, had endorsed 20 October 2010 as the date for the first World Statistics Day, as well as the general theme of "Celebrating the many achievements of official statistics" and the core values of service, integrity and professionalism, while recognizing that each country might develop its own national theme, taking into account national priorities and circumstances (see E/2010/24, chap. I.B).

2. Following the celebration of the first World Statistics Day on 20 October 2010, the Commission, at its forty-second session, in its decision 42/101, expressed satisfaction and appreciation that the observance of World Statistics Day had been a global success and had made a positive impact in advocating the importance of official statistics. Moreover, the Commission commended the Statistics Division of the United Nations for providing useful tools and supporting the celebrations worldwide. It took note of the recommendation to allocate adequate time for preparation of the celebrations at the national and global levels and observed that, while the celebrations for the observance of World Statistics Day in 2010 had reached a wide audience, more attention should be given in the future to maximizing coverage in the media. The Commission also encouraged continuation of the observance of regional and national statistics days, which had proved to have a positive impact in promoting the role of statistics (see E/2011/24, chap. I.B).

3. In the context of the discussion about possible future World Statistics Days, the Commission took note of the proposals to observe World Statistics Day regularly, with a strong preference for either a two- or a five-year interval between observances, and requested the Statistics Division to formulate, in consultation with

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the Bureau of the Statistical Commission, a proposal regarding the frequency of the observance and its modalities, including the possibility of the adoption of a resolution by the General Assembly, and to report to the Commission at its forty-third session on that proposal (ibid.).

II. Consultation with the Bureau of the Statistical Commission

4. The Statistics Division, as the secretariat of the Commission, carefully reviewed and analysed the records of the discussion at the forty-second session of the Commission, on the basis of which and of further informal consultations with Member States, it presented a proposal to the Bureau for review and approval. The Bureau subsequently recommended the following:

A. Five-year periodicity

5. A majority of speakers at the Commission had favoured such a five-year interval. Some of the reasons put forward in support of this periodicity were:

- Marking World Statistics Day globally every five years would enable this international day to have and to maintain a more exceptional status, more likely to give rise to high-profile events and to generate a considerable amount of publicity
- This option would also leave more room to national statistical offices to focus on their respective regional and national days and other public activities
- A five-year interval for marking World Statistics Day globally would be more realistic, taking into account the limited resources often available to national statistical offices and to the Statistics Division of the United Nations for promotional activities
- A five-year interval would fit in naturally with the rhythm of the 10-year global census rounds.

B. Modality

6. One of the key elements of the overwhelming success of the first World Statistics Day was the organizational model of "decentralization", by which countries and international agencies could develop ideas and activities suitable for their particular circumstances. The Statistics Division, under the mandate of the Statistical Commission, provided central leadership by making available promotional materials (logo, posters, press kits, etc.) and by creating a platform where country experiences were exchanged. It is proposed to maintain that basic organizational model. In line with the recommendation of the Statistical Commission, more attention should be given to maximizing coverage in the media. This will allow an even wider audience to be reached, beyond the professional community, to which to advocate the importance of official statistics.

C. General Assembly resolutions for future World Statistics Days

7. The mandate provided by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/267, in which it established World Statistics Day for 20 October 2010 was a crucial basis for bringing the issue of official statistics to the attention of policy decision makers at the highest levels. It is, therefore, suggested that the mandate of the General Assembly again be sought for future World Statistics Days. Specifically in order to leave sufficient time for preparatory activities, it is suggested to seek the mandate of the General Assembly at the latest by 2014 for World Statistics Day 2015, as well as for future World Statistics Days at the proposed five-year intervals.

III. Conclusion

8. By taking note of this report, the Commission is invited to confirm the Bureau's recommendation that World Statistics Day be observed every five years.

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Provisional agenda and dates for the forty-fourth session of the Commission

Draft multi-year programme of work of the Statistical Commission, 2012-2015

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/51, a proposed multi-year programme of work for the Statistical Commission is set out below. Reflecting comments from members and observers of the Commission and a review of its workplans by the Statistics Division, it constitutes a revision of the multi-year programme of work of the Statistical Commission, 2011-2014 (E/CN.3/2011/36) considered by the Commission at its forty-second session.

* E/CN.3/2012/1.

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Proposed multi-year programme of work for the Statistical Commission, 2012-2015

Agenda item	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*20*
1. Demographic and social statistics				
(a) Population and housing censuses	X	X	X	
(b) Human settlements statistics		X		
(c) Health statistics		X		
(d) Social statistics			X	
(e) Poverty statistics			X	
(f) Education statistics		X		
(g) Statistics of drugs and drug use			X	
(h) Statistics on crime	X			
(i) Washington Group on Disability Measurement (city group)	X		X	
(j) Migration statistics			X	
(k) Employment statistics		X		
(l) Gender statistics	X	X		
(m) Culture statistics		X		
2. Economic statistics				
(a) National accounts	X	X	X	
(b) Agricultural statistics	X	X		
(c) Wye Group on Statistics on Rural Development and Agriculture Household Income (city group)	X			
(d) Industrial statistics		X		
(e) Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers		X		
(f) Energy statistics	X	X		
(g) Oslo Group on Energy Statistics (city group)		X		
(h) Distributive trade statistics			X	
(i) International merchandise trade statistics	X		X	
(j) Statistics of international trade in services	X		X	
(k) Statistics of services			X	
(l) Voorburg Group on Service Statistics (city group)			X	
(m) Information and communication technologies statistics	X			
(n) Tourism statistics		X		
(o) Finance statistics	X			
(p) International Comparison Programme	X	X	X	
(q) Ottawa Group on Price Indexes (city group)	X		X	
(r) Price statistics		X		
(s) Statistics of science and technology		X		
(t) Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics (city group)		X		
(u) Integrated economic statistics		X		
(v) Short-term economic indicators			X	

Agenda item	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*
3. Natural resources and environment statistics				
(a) Environment statistics	X	X		X
(b) Environmental-economic accounting	X	X	X	X
(c) London Group on Environmental Accounting (city group)			X	
(d) Climate change statistics			X	
(e) Statistics for natural resource-based economies	X			
4. Activities not classified by field				
(a) Coordination and integration of statistical programmes	X	X	X	X
(b) Programme questions (United Nations Statistics Division)	X	X	X	X
(c) Statistics of human development	X		X	
(d) Implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics	X	X	X	
(e) International economic and social classifications	X		X	
(f) Common open standards for the exchange and sharing of data and metadata		X		
(g) Presentation of statistical data and metadata			X	
(h) Statistical capacity-building		X		X
(i) Dissemination of statistics by the United Nations Statistics Division			X	
(j) Development indicators	X	X	X	X
(k) Follow-up to Economic and Social Council policy decisions	X	X	X	X
(l) Working methods of the Statistical Commission		X		
(m) Principles governing international statistical activities			X	
(n) Regional statistical development	X	X	X	X
(o) National quality assurance frameworks	X	X		
(p) Global Geospatial Information Management	X		X	
(q) World Statistics Day	X		X	
(r) Coordination of statistical activities in the United Nations	X	X		
(s) Efforts in developing a plan of action on statistical development	X			
Total number of items	**30**	**32**	**31**	**17**

Programme reviews

2003: Statistics of services

2004: Social statistics

2005: Energy statistics

2006: Industrial statistics

2007: Education statistics

2008: Employment statistics

2009: Climate change and official statistics

2010: National quality assurance frameworks

2011: Gender statistics

2012: Population and Housing Censuses

2013: To be decided